



STATE OF IDAHO

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

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[Idaho State Department of Agriculture Marketing Program Wins National Award](#)

BOISE - The Idaho State Department of Agriculture's Market Development Division won the Award of Agricultural Marketing Excellence presented by the North American Agricultural Marketing Officials (NAAMO) at its recent annual meeting.

The prestigious award recognizes innovative and effective agricultural marketing programs from U.S. states and Canadian provinces. One state or province is selected annually. The division received the award for the Idaho Preferred® Healthy Harvest school program.

"It is very exciting to have the marketing division and Idaho Preferred® recognized on a national level," said Celia Gould, director of the Idaho State Department of Agriculture (ISDA). "Idaho is setting the standard for other states."

Idaho Preferred®, is the department's brand designed to help promote the quality, diversity and availability of Idaho food and agriculture products.

"A goal of the school program has been twofold – educating children about Idaho food and agriculture and getting local Idaho food products into the schools," said Leah Clark, ISDA trade specialist.

The department instituted a pilot program in four Boise-area schools in 2004. The program included Idaho fruits and vegetables on school lunch menus, curriculum packets for teachers, and even school-wide Healthy Harvest celebrations.

In response to new USDA Wellness Policy guidelines, Healthy Harvest was enhanced in 2005 with a fundraising component featuring fresh Idaho fruits and vegetables as well as local specialty foods. The program also was expanded to the Meridian School District, the largest in Idaho with nearly 27,000 students.

The program has continued to expand. In collaboration with the Idaho State Department of Education and the USDA-funded Fresh Fruit and Vegetable program, an additional 25 schools across the state joined the Healthy Harvest program. More than 40 schools featured fresh Idaho fruits and vegetables on their menus in 2006, reaching more than 50,000 students. Sales from the school fundraiser exceeded \$40,000.

New schools, materials and events continue to be added statewide including the "My Idaho Pyramid," an edited version of the USDA food pyramid adapted specifically to products grown and raised in Idaho.

"This is a very dynamic program that shows what can happen when you have creative employees, great programs, collaboration with other state and federal agencies and quality food and agriculture products," Gould said.

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